

INFORMATION

AGENDA ITEM: LoC Communications Program

GENERAL OVERALL PROGRAM UPDATES:

As announced at the February 2001 Board meeting, Sarah Dalton has been added to the CSL Communications Office. Her duties include editor of Connection and development of press releases and other information tools describing the various programs in which the State Library is involved, including the Library of California. Ms. Dalton will be introduced to the Board at this meeting.

Exhibit A is a copy of the Charter (i.e. editorial policy) for Connection. CSL staff is interested in getting feedback from Board members regarding the provisions of this charter. Board members are asked to provide their feedback to Liz Gibson, the Board's representative to the CSL staff team for Connection.

The editorial board described in the Governance section of the charter also calls for a representative of the LoC Board to ensure a formal channel for Board input into Connection editorial policies and proposed changes on an ongoing basis.

Staff Liaison: Liz Gibson

Charter for On-Line Newsletter

Connection

Purpose of Publication

The on-line newsletter, *Connection*, serves the library community of California as an up-to-date and readily available vehicle for news about current library programs, practices, events, developments, people, and ideas. In creating the on-line newsletter, California State Library (CSL) staff conducted focus groups and interviewed librarians around the state to determine what kinds of current information would be most valuable to them. The informational needs and desires of librarians in California will continue to drive the content of *Connection*.

The librarians interviewed expressed a desire to:

- receive information for a better understanding of the Library of California (LoC),
- learn more about marketing their libraries to their respective boards and their publics,
- find useful information about possible funding sources and techniques for raising money,
- obtain information and recommendations on meeting their staffing needs and finding the funding to offer competitive pay,

- explore issues of library identification and changes in library services,
- receive data on keeping pace with the technologies that can be used in libraries to improve efficiency and extend services,
- read about contemporary library issues and best practices for libraries,
- obtain information on the 2000 Bond Act (public librarians),
- find information on collection management, preservation programs and professional training (academic and school libraries), and professional training,
- obtain data on the results of evaluations of online databases and group discount contracts (special libraries), and
- receive reports on innovative and creative projects in libraries.

The focus groups also indicated they did not wish to receive personal stories about librarians, information on employment opportunities, nor reports of general CSL activities.

The on-line newsletter also must be responsive to the program needs of the CSL, the LoC and the 2000 Bond Act.

Each issue should attempt to supply librarians around the state with the information they need to do their jobs better, including information about the CSL, LoC, and Bond Act programs and policies

To meet this objective, the newsletter will be issued on a monthly basis and will be presented in a professional, attractive manner that will encourage readers to rely on its accuracy and to enjoy reading it.

Style

The Chicago Manual of Style will be the style manual for *Connection*. Questions of punctuation, capitalization, and usage will be referred to it. The *Associated Press (AP) Stylebook*, which does not conflict with the manual on any major points, may be substituted for it as a working source of guidance.

With a view to make *Connection* comprehensible to the largest possible number of readers, including non-librarians the editors will eschew jargon as much as possible.

The editors will attempt to use active voice instead of passive voice as much as possible.

Content

Limitations of space dictate that *Connection* must be selective in the information it provides and its choice of articles. Priority will be given to articles most likely to address the stated needs and concerns of librarians and library advocates around the state. Priority also will be given to articles about the LoC and the Bond Act, since one of the purposes of this on-line newsletter is to keep the library community

informed about the growth of the LoC programs and the expenditure of Bond Act funds.

Connection will not carry news items about activities of or changes in staff at the CSL or individual members of the LoC or Bond Act boards, *unless* those are likely to be of import to a significant segment of the library community and relate directly to the programs of the LoC, Bond Act or CSL. The retirement of a state librarian or the appointment of a new state librarian by the governor would warrant a news article in *Connection*. The same would hold true for any change in leadership at Library Development Services, since this department works closely with libraries around the state. The same also would apply to any change in leadership in the LoC or the Office of Library Construction. Other appointments or changes and retirements will be considered on a case-by-case basis, the judgment turning on the relevance to the library community as a whole. Ordinary speeches, public appearances, travel, and meeting attendance by staff or board members are generally not material for *Connection*.

Connection is not intended as just a publicity vehicle for the CSL, the state librarian, members of the LoC board or Bond Act board, or staff of the CSL. The goal is for *Connection* to be valued as a timely and informative source of information about library programs and services.

Connection will carry information about:

1. Advances in the LoC. The ongoing status of the LoC as it organizes region by region and works to deliver library services in new ways.
2. Proceedings of LoC and Bond Act board meetings. At each meeting, the LoC and Bond Act boards consider matters of importance to libraries throughout the state; hence a summary of key activities at these meetings will appear in *Connection* in a timely manner.
3. Programs that work. Library practices that have proved successful, gathered from around the state.
4. Library bond funding activities. In the focus groups, librarians expressed a desire to keep abreast of issues related to funding of library services: bond acts, fundraising, and grants.
5. Outreach programs of the CSL. Programs such as the Shades of California, Families for Literacy, and other programs in which libraries may want to participate.
6. Distribution of bond-act funds. The library community wants information about the decision making, standards, revelations, etc., concerning the allocation of monies for library construction and renovation bonds.
7. Programs sponsored by the California Library Association. Although the CLA has its own newsletter, the CSL will support it in publicizing its activities, when appropriate. The goal is to inform the library community about library activities around the state.

8. Opportunities for librarians and other library staff to upgrade skills.

The need for librarians and library staff to stay abreast of advances in communications technology is crucial to the maintenance of library services.

9. General issues of interest to the library community. From time to time the newsletter may excerpt or summarize remarks by the state librarian or by other librarians or state officials on issues of general interest to the library community. An example might be Nicholson Baker's article in *The New Yorker* on the widespread library practice of "de-acquisitioning" old newspapers.

Governance

Connection is produced under the authority of the state librarian, who ultimately must approve all aspects of the on-line publication. The state librarian will select an editorial board to render advice on policy changes and content of the newsletter. The editorial board shall consist of ten members, including: two representatives of libraries other than the CSL; one member representing the LoC Board; one member representing the Bond Act Board; one representative of regional networks of the LoC; three representatives of bureaus within the CSL; one representative from the communications, publications, or public relations department of another state agency; and one "at large" representative. The editorial board shall meet in Sacramento on a

quarterly basis to review past issues of *Connection*, and it shall advise the editor on policies related to content, format, style, design, and presentation of the newsletter. Members of the editorial board will further advise the editor on whether or not the on-line newsletter is meeting its stated goals, and they will consider the editor's proposals for changes in the newsletter, rendering their opinions based on their own expertise and backgrounds.

Members of the editorial board will be appointed by the state librarian upon recommendation of the represented groups and shall serve two-year terms. A member whose term has expired may be reappointed once, serving a maximum of four years.